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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Sixty-fourth session

Summary record of the 1406th meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 5 July 2016, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Hayashi

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Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of the Philippines (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of the Philippines (continued) (CEDAW/C/PHL/7-8; CEDAW/C/PHL/Q/7-8 and Add.1)

Articles 7 to 9 (continued)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the Philippines took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Verzosa** (Philippines), replying to questions posed at the previous meeting, said that statistics from the Commission on Elections demonstrated that more women than men had registered to vote in the recent 2016 elections. The number of women candidates elected, however, remained well below the 50 per cent target, at just 17.5 per cent, although that figure was based on partial election results. The Philippine Commission on Women organized events and used crowdsourcing on social media to foster women's participation in the shaping of Government policy. Progress had been made towards achieving the 50 per cent quota introduced to ensure women's equal representation in third-level managerial positions, with around 44 per cent of those positions currently being occupied by women. Lastly, several bills aimed at promoting women's equal representation in political parties had yet to be approved, and efforts would be made to ensure that those bills were prioritized in Congress.

3. **Ms. Rebong** (Philippines) said that 44 per cent of Filipino ambassadors and chiefs of mission and 45 per cent of high-ranking positions within the Department of Foreign Affairs were occupied by women. It was therefore hoped that an equal gender balance would soon be achieved. In the meantime, the Government would make use of information campaigns and the Committee's upcoming recommendations in order to encourage more women to seek out high-level roles in different sectors.

4. **Ms. Sobritchea** (Philippines) said that indigenous communities were represented on planning and decision-making bodies at the national level, where a goal of 30 per cent for women's participation had been set, and similar quotas at other levels of government had been introduced in order to foster the active engagement of indigenous peoples.

5. **Ms. Jahan** said that she would welcome clarification on whether the Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act and the Magna Carta of Women provided women and men with equal rights to transmit Philippine citizenship to their children and to foreign spouses. She also wished to know to what extent information had been disseminated about the Act and whether data could be provided on the number of Filipino women who, having lost their Philippine citizenship, had subsequently reacquired it.

6. **Ms. Rebong** (Philippines) said that, under the Constitution, both Filipino women and men had the right to transfer their Philippine citizenship to their children. Filipino women who were required to become naturalized citizens of another country owing to marriage to a foreign national were able to retain their Philippine citizenship.

7. **Ms. Zou** Xiaoqiao said that she wished to know whether there had been any systematic impact assessment of the Philippine National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security for the period 2010-2016 for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and whether the Plan would continue beyond 2016.

8. **Ms. Verzosa** (Philippines) said that there was an ongoing assessment of the impact of the Philippine National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and that the

indicators used to track implementation of the resolutions were in line with international standards.

9. **Ms. Mutin** (Philippines) said that women occupied many high-level positions in the peace negotiations. The rights of women in conflict-affected areas were protected under the Magna Carta of Women and, in 2010, the Philippines had become the first country in Asia to implement a national action plan on women, peace and security. Women's organizations had been actively participating in the implementation of the Plan, particularly in marginalized areas such as the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. A women's organization had recently conducted an impact assessment of the status of implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in the Autonomous Region, which had found that there had been good collaboration between the Government and local government units. Lastly, the National Steering Committee on the National Action Plan was also in the process of implementing a monitoring and evaluation programme.

10. **Ms. Rebong** (Philippines) added that the National Action Plan would continue to be implemented after 2016.

Articles 10 to 14

11. **Ms. Bailey** said she was concerned that the school enrolment figures, which had led the State party to focus primarily on reducing boys' dropout rates, masked the fact that many girls had not attended school. For example, the 2010 net enrolment ratio for girls in secondary education was just 66 per cent, which meant that 34 per cent had not been enrolled. She would be interested to know where those girls were and why they were not in school; whether there were specific obstacles preventing their attendance; and what action, including the use of temporary special measures, had been taken or was envisaged to ensure that those girls had access to education. In that connection, she wondered whether the bill on education contained measures to facilitate the integration of children with special needs into mainstream education and foster an inclusive education system with appropriately trained teachers.

12. She wished to know whether Committees on Decorum and Investigation had now been established in all schools and tertiary institutions and whether those Committees were empowered to investigate cases of sexual harassment and make recommendations to the relevant authorities for action.

13. Lastly, she asked what action had been taken or was envisaged to increase the enrolment of women and girls in science, technology, engineering, agriculture and mathematics courses and to put an end to gender segregation in fields of study, which limited women's career prospects.

14. **Mr. Bruun** said that while recent achievements made in the area of employment were commendable, such as the repeal of certain discriminatory provisions in the Labour Code and the ratification of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), the Committee had serious concerns about the number of women working in the informal sector. He wished to know what measures had been taken to protect those women, in particular to provide them with basic social security and other benefits, and to promote their integration into the formal economy. Similarly, he was concerned that women migrant workers, indigenous women and women with disabilities faced considerable obstacles to entry into the labour market, and he wondered whether the application of the Domestic Workers Act was being monitored.

15. He wished to know what steps were being taken to challenge stereotypes regarding occupational gender segregation and reduce the considerable gender pay gap. In that connection, he urged the State party to review its very narrow interpretation of "work of equal value" under the national law with a view to bringing the definition of that concept

into line with that of the Convention and to introduce objective job evaluation schemes to promote equal pay.

16. Lastly, sexual harassment in the workplace seemed to be a major problem, and yet very few data had been provided on the matter, particularly in relation to the private sector. He wished to know whether the State party had begun to collect data on complaints relating to harassment and how the Government intended to ensure that the pending anti-sexual harassment bills, once passed, would lead to effective measures on the ground.

17. **Ms. Chalal**, while commending the enactment of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law, said that many women, particularly rural women, women with disabilities, indigenous women and Muslim women, faced severe difficulties in accessing health-care services and were often subjected to humiliation in health centres. She asked whether the State party planned to increase the financial, human and technical resources in the health-care sector to improve health-care coverage, particularly in hard-to-reach areas; whether a bill had been formulated to legalize abortion in certain cases; whether the sanctions against women who sought clandestine abortions had or would be lifted; and why grounds on which an abortion was permitted were not included in the final draft of the Philippine Code of Crimes.

18. On the issue of HIV/AIDS, she wished to know how many women were living with HIV in the State party, in particular women engaged in prostitution, and what measures had been taken to protect HIV-positive women from discrimination and contain the spread of HIV. On that point, she enquired what had been the outcome of the measures introduced to reduce and prevent infection rates, particularly in the light of the 800 new cases diagnosed so far in 2016. She also wished to know whether sex education in schools was delivered by adequately trained professionals; whether the State party had achieved its goal of significantly reducing the maternal and neonatal mortality rates by 2015; whether the legislation on reproductive health also covered lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons; whether specific financial resources had been allocated to address the health-care needs of women and girls with disabilities; and whether a control mechanism was in place to ensure the effectiveness of women's right to health, particularly in respect of the most vulnerable women in society.

19. **Ms. Patten**, while also welcoming the adoption of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law, said it was unfortunate that the State party had failed to repeal various local laws and policies restricting women's access to modern contraceptives. Regarding the Committee's 2012 inquiry concerning the Philippines under article 8 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, it was regrettable that Executive Orders Nos. 003 and 030 had still not been officially revoked. In that connection, she wished to know what concrete action was being taken to review and repeal those Orders, to ensure the implementation of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law and to guarantee access to a range of contraceptive methods, particularly for economically disadvantaged women. She would also welcome information on the progress of the efforts to decentralize health-care services and on the establishment of effective monitoring and oversight mechanisms to promote greater coordination and ensure that reproductive health laws and strategies were being fully implemented. Lastly, she invited the delegation to comment on a recent Supreme Court judgment which had temporarily prevented the Department of Health from dispensing certain contraceptives and services.

20. **Ms. Sobritchea** (Philippines) said that the Government had empowered three institutions to oversee special measures in education: the Department of Education, the Commission on Higher Education and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. The special measures consisted of scholarships for girls who wished to enrol in traditionally male-dominated courses, such as engineering, architecture and geology, or in technical skills programmes, such as welding, consumer electronics and automotive

services. In an effort to address gender stereotyping, schools at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels had received administrative orders to identify and correct gender biases in curricula, teaching methods and learning materials. All schools were required to implement the Magna Carta of Women and other relevant laws fully, including those on gender-based violence, and accountability measures had been introduced to ensure that school officials, teachers and other staff who were in violation of those laws were liable to both criminal and administrative sanctions. An online complaints mechanism had been set up to enable students and other members of the academic community to report sexual harassment, rape or other offences, and victims of such offences were entitled to receive counselling and legal aid.

21. Targeted financial assistance was provided to girls in very poor, indigenous or Muslim communities, and needy students could apply for loans and special grants to help them make the transition from school to the labour market. Women who had not completed their basic schooling were offered remedial education aimed at improving their employment opportunities, and free day-care services were available to women with children who were enrolled in job training programmes. The Conditional Cash Transfer Programme, which had been very effective, was available to the poorest families; it required parents to keep their children in school in exchange for financial support.

22. The Government's attempts to end gender role stereotyping in education had resulted in very positive overall outcomes, such as increases in female school enrolment and completion rates and higher rates of female tertiary enrolment, employment and female representation in traditionally male-dominated occupations.

23. **Ms. Sy** (Philippines) said that an overwhelming majority of small enterprises and micro-businesses were part of the informal sector. The Government was taking steps to strengthen the Sustainable Livelihood Programme in order to bring them into the formal economy, including providing capacity-building to women in that sector and promoting greater innovation and productivity. In addition, new entrepreneurs were given training in basic business ethics as a way of encouraging them to enrol their businesses in the social security scheme and register with the authorities.

24. A series of laws had recently been enacted for the benefit of women in salaried employment, and their provisions had been incorporated into the labour law compliance system applied by the Government. As part of the system, enterprises were requested, inter alia, to set up a Committee on Decorum and Investigation concerning sexual harassment in the workplace, compensate women victims of violence, promote breastfeeding and conduct public awareness-raising concerning violence against women. Of the 44,000 labour law compliance visits that had been carried out by the Department of Labour and Employment in 2015, 86.8 per cent were found to be in compliance with the gender-based provisions in the law.

25. In keeping with the Constitution, the more than 2,000 public employment service offices in the country strictly adhered to a policy of non-discrimination in recruitment. In addition, gender equality awareness-raising programmes for employers taught human resources officers to focus solely on the competitive skills and competencies of candidates, not on their age or gender. The Wage Rationalization Act of 1989 had instituted a State policy to ensure a decent standard of living for all persons by means of a regionally adjusted minimum wage. The wage-setting process prescribed under the policy did not allow for discrimination on the basis of gender, age or skills. Based on the 2014 Labour Force Survey conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority, the average basic pay of women was higher than that of men. Any wage disparities between men and women that existed in wages above the minimum wage were due to the supply of, or demand for, skills in the labour market and not to occupational stereotyping.

26. **Mr. Larga** (Philippines) said that two agencies were responsible for registering the employment of domestic workers at home and abroad: the Bureau of Workers with Special Concerns and the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration. The Administration ensured that all overseas employment contracts for domestic labour provided for payment of the monthly minimum wage, which was US$ 400, and other standard labour provisions. Before leaving the country for work abroad, domestic workers were required to complete a comprehensive pre-departure orientation programme. Domestic workers recruited by a private employment agency were covered by a mandatory insurance plan, and the Administration required employers to set up an escrow account for the payment of any claims arising out of breaches of contract, including abuse and exploitation of the worker. Private agencies were required to monitor the working conditions of workers employed abroad, to report irregularities and to designate a focal point for workers' welfare concerns.

27. **Mr. Bayugo** (Philippines) said that the budget of the Department of Health had totalled 2.5 billion Philippine pesos in 2015 and had been increased to 2.8 billion pesos in 2016. A budget of 4.2 billion pesos had been requested for 2017. An attempt to amend the criminal law in order to provide for certain grounds on which abortion was permitted had failed, and a recommendation had been made to submit a separate bill on the matter to Congress. To date, no bill on legalizing abortion on such grounds had been formulated.

28. Some 33,400 cases of HIV/AIDS had been reported for the period between January 1984 and April 2016; of those, 2,420 were women. In 2015, a total of 324 million pesos of the Department of Health budget had been set aside for sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, including anti-retroviral treatment for 13,900 HIV-positive people, 556 of whom were women. Various aspects of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law addressed the concerns of LGBT persons, such as the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and included measures to eliminate sexual and gender-based violence. A specific section of the Law provided for the establishment of sexual and reproductive health programmes for persons with disabilities and required cities and municipalities to eliminate barriers to reproductive health services for such persons.

29. **Ms. Ang** (Philippines) said that Executive Orders No. 003 and No. 030 by the City of Manila had been revoked automatically through the enactment of the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law, which superseded any law that was contrary to or inconsistent with its provisions, except the law on abortion. All reproductive health services provided for under the Law were currently available in health centres in Manila. Despite the ban imposed by the mayor of Sorsogon on the provision of any form of artificial contraception, State health workers had not stopped procuring and distributing modern methods of contraception in that city.

30. **Ms. Rebong** (Philippines) said that the Government would submit written replies to any questions that it had not yet answered. She wished to clarify that, even though abortion was not yet available, post-abortion health services were provided to women who needed them.

31. **Ms. Jahan** asked what specific policy measures and programmes had been established to ensure that older women, women heads of household and chronically ill women enjoyed the right to food, which was provided for explicitly under the Magna Carta of Women. What mechanism had been devised to safeguard the socioeconomic rights of women who were evicted from their land and deprived of their livelihoods as a result of beautification or development projects in urban slum areas? The delegation should comment on reports that social protection services provided to rural women by companies under the guise of corporate social responsibility were often, in fact, incentives to convince them to leave their ancestral lands.

32. She asked whether women employed in the informal sector were covered by employment insurance, had access to basic social security benefits and enjoyed labour benefits and whether a comprehensive social protection framework had been developed for women and girls with disabilities. She would appreciate receiving information on women's participation in sports and other recreational activities.

33. **Ms. Gabr** asked how the important economic achievements made by the Philippines in recent years had affected the lives of rural women and how the Government planned to implement and monitor the Magna Carta of Women in rural areas. She would appreciate an account of the steps being taken by the Government to protect the rights of rural women who faced old and new challenges, such as living in a patriarchal society and the increasing exploitation of land for non-agricultural uses. What measures had it taken to remedy the gender pay gap in rural areas, the failure to recognize the role played by women as food producers and the impact of armed conflict on rural women and their assets? The delegation should comment on the alleged extrajudicial killings of women from rural and indigenous populations in connection with the increasing presence of extractive industries.

34. She wished to know what steps the Government planned to take in order to raise awareness of and make use of the Committee's general recommendation No. 34 on the rights of rural women, including its dissemination and translation into regional languages. In addressing the needs of women in its Muslim minority, the State party might wish to consider how Muslim women's rights had evolved in other countries where sharia law was practised, such as Tunisia, which had abolished polygamy. She asked what measures were being taken to use new technologies in order to help vulnerable communities and rural women.

35. **Ms. Jahan** asked whether a gender perspective had been incorporated into the design, implementation and monitoring of national environmental and climate change policies and programmes and whether women were afforded opportunities for active and equal participation in their design and implementation. She wished to know whether vulnerable women received special protection during disaster relief efforts, including from sexual violence and exploitation, and how women's access to food, health care and basic hygiene was ensured in the event of disasters. Given that the Committee was in the process of drafting a new general recommendation on the gender-related dimensions of disaster risk reduction and climate change, she asked whether a gender lens was used in mobilizing and dispersing funds for climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and management and post-disaster relief and rehabilitation.

36. **Ms. Villar** (Philippines) said that the term "senior citizens" applied to all older persons over the age of 60. The Philippines had introduced non-contributory social pensions scheme under the Expanded Senior Citizens Act for indigent senior citizens who did not receive adequate support from their relatives. Older persons were also covered by a mandatory health insurance scheme. Under the social protection framework, policies and programmes had been developed to protect women, children and other vulnerable populations. There were four main programme areas: labour market intervention, social insurance, social welfare and safety nets.

37. **Ms. Mendoza** (Philippines) said that the Government of the Philippines recognized the valuable contribution of rural women as food producers, notably in fisheries, bio-intensive horticulture and food processing. Services offered to gardeners included the provision of seeds, planting material and equipment; recently, many new community gardens had been established. The Department of Agrarian Reform and the Department of Agriculture provided assistance to rural women working in agriculture and fisheries. Credit and loan arrangements, training, assistance in marketing goods and women-friendly equipment and technology were also available. Efforts were being made to make such assistance more gender-sensitive.

38. **Mr. Fos** (Philippines), replying to the question raised about urban or rural dwellers affected by development projects, said that the Urban Development and Housing Act ensured the participation of the families concerned and provided for a consultation process, social services, livelihood support, a relocation entitlement, an ample period of 30 days to prepare for relocation and financial assistance. Families were moved either to alternative relocation sites or to urban low-rise buildings and were supplied with water, power and other basic services. Cash transfers were available for women, children, older persons, and persons with disabilities. The National Housing Authority was carrying out programmes that surpassed the provisions of the Urban Development and Housing Act, such as programmes to build communities, train leaders and inculcate an understanding of gender issues.

39. **Ms. Mutin** (Philippines), turning to a question raised about sharia law and the Magna Carta of Women, said that the Government of the Philippines acknowledged that the Code of Muslim Personal Laws was outdated and that amendments must urgently be introduced in such areas as polygamy and early and forced marriage, which violated women's rights. There were ongoing discussions between religious scholars and leaders, representatives of progressive women's groups and lawmakers about bringing the Code before Congress for amendment. Furthermore, the Gender and Development Code of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao contained a provision under which marriage to a child under the age of 18 was discouraged, and the highest religious policymaking body in the country had issued a fatwa on the model Islamic family that covered early and forced marriage and polygamy.

40. **Ms. Sobritchea** (Philippines) said that she would answer questions related to mining on indigenous lands. The Government had taken a number of measures to maximize benefits for the indigenous communities that chose to allow investors and mining companies to operate on their lands. A strict procedure was followed. The Government determined whether the area was suitable for mining and, when it gave its approval, the participatory planning and consultation process began. The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples then certified that the particular indigenous community was willing to participate. The benefit was the payment of a royalty, which could be used to strengthen the community economy. There were programmes to provide alternative livelihoods in the event that traditional practices were interrupted by the mining industry. Women, in particular, were closely involved in planning for alternative livelihoods.

41. The political, social and cultural situation in indigenous areas presented an important challenge, however. Indigenous communities were often not united; there was tension and friction among the members. Sometimes more than one community shared the same land area. Clan killing was a grave political problem in areas where indigenous communities lived; there were also anti-Government groups posing challenges to the maintenance of law and order. In addition, there had been extrajudicial killings of anti-mining activists. Those were complex matters that varied from region to region. Mindanao, for instance, had its own legal framework for dealing with extrajudicial killings.

42. **Ms. Villar** (Philippines) said that, as a result of the many humanitarian emergencies that had occurred over the recent decade, the Government had significant experience in emergency response, disaster-risk reduction and climate change management. All initiatives were designed to ensure that women and girls were the primary focus of disaster response; woman- and child-friendly spaces were provided in evacuation centres and relocation sites to provide specialized care for their needs during crises. The Magna Carta of Women stipulated that women should be included in decision-making bodies on such matters as environmental and natural resource management, climate change adaptation and disaster response. In May 2016, President Aquino had signed the Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act; the implementing regulations were currently being drafted.

43. **Ms. Verzosa** (Philippines) said that statistics on women in sports were inconsistent and incomplete. In general, however, there were fewer women than men who participated in sports, and fewer awards and prizes were available for them. Therefore, that subject had been addressed in the Magna Carta of Women, in the section entitled "Women in Sports".

44. **Ms. Jahan** asked what measures the Government was taking to implement the provisions of the Magna Carta of Women related to equality for women and the elimination of discrimination against them, in particular in view of its section 12, which specified that discriminatory laws would be amended or repealed within three years after the enactment of that instrument. What steps was the Philippine Commission on Women taking to encourage the new Congress to take action? She pointed out that the Magna Carta indicated that customary laws related to marital relations would be respected provided that they did not discriminate against women. However, the Muslim Code of Personal Laws was filled with discriminatory provisions. It would be useful to know if any studies had been undertaken by the Government to improve women's equal recognition before the law that took into consideration the country's legal pluralism.

45. **Ms. Nadaraia**, invoking article 16, paragraph 1 of the Convention, said that the Magna Carta of Women was presented as a translation of the Convention into the Philippine national legal framework. A number of laws observed by Muslims in the country, however, were at variance with the provisions of the article. The Muslim Code allowed for polygamy, early marriage and arranged marriage; it also allowed a husband to choose the family residence and to refuse to permit his wife to exercise a profession or occupation of her choice. In some indigenous communities, abduction for forced cohabitation was still permissible. The Government should describe any measures taken to repeal customary provisions that violated the terms of the Convention. Information would also be welcome on the bills before Congress giving equal decision-making power to husbands and wives and on the time frame for their adoption.

46. Moreover, noting that many adultery cases were initiated by men wishing to harass and coerce estranged wives into handing over contested property, she enquired whether the Government planned to repeal provisions against adultery in the Revised Penal Code. She would also like to know the status of the bill on legalizing divorce and the time frame envisaged for its adoption. It would be useful to know whether husbands and wives would be granted the same rights on dissolution of the marriage and how the rights of children would be protected.

47. In addition, she would like to know the time frame for the repeal of laws banning persons with disabilities from marrying on the basis of mental, psychosocial or physical disabilities, in particular provisions that discriminated against the right of women with disabilities to marry and found a family. Lastly, she asked whether there were plans to enact a national law prohibiting discrimination against LGBT persons who wished to marry.

48. **Ms. Verzosa** (Philippines) said the Philippine Commission on Women had a women's priority legislative agenda, which focused on amendments to the Family Code and other laws containing discriminatory provisions against women. The current emphasis was on encouraging Muslim women to recruit other Muslim women, so that together they could advocate for the repeal of early and forced marriage and polygamy. There were no pending bills on marriage equality. LGBT groups had stated that the first step was anti-discrimination legislation; in their view, it was too soon to begin advocating diverse forms of marriage. She noted that some Protestant sects permitted gay marriage.

49. Similarly, the Commission had decided to work first on advocating women's right to reproductive health rather than on repealing the ban on divorce. There was much opposition from certain sectors of society. A legislator had recently introduced a divorce bill; it was

hoped that other sponsors would back it. There was no Government policy that restricted the marriage rights of persons with disabilities.

50. **Ms. Rebong** (Philippines) said that the Government of the Philippines was fully committed to the implementation of the Convention and looked forward to continued work with the Committee on behalf of all Filipinos.

51. **Ms. Verzosa** (Philippines), thanking the members of the Committee for their questions, said that the dialogue had suggested ways of improving the implementation of both the Convention and the Magna Carta of Women and of better responding to the needs of women and girls in the Philippines. She also wished to thank the civil society organizations for their important contributions.

52. As the national agency responsible for implementing the Convention, the Philippine Commission on Women strived to coordinate and channel all efforts to realize gender equality, human rights and the empowerment of women and girls. The Commission would seek to improve its monitoring methods in order to see de facto results of its efforts. It was difficult to provide time frames for the adoption of laws; the Commission worked with legislators in the hopes that they would advocate the adoption and amendment of laws. Some of the recently elected women Senators had worked with the Commission in the past; the Commission hoped for their continued interest and support. The Committee's concluding observations would be shared with all interested persons and agencies.

53. **Ms. Manalo** (Philippines) said that although the Government had been slow in submitting its report to the Committee, the Philippines had not given up fighting to protect and promote the rights of Filipino women. The dialogue had been fruitful, and the questions raised had indeed been helpful. She looked forward to rejoining the Committee as a member in January 2017.

54. **The Chair** said that the Committee thanked the State party for its efforts and urged it to take all necessary measures to address all recommendations set out in the concluding observations with a view to improving the situation of women in the Philippines.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.